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**From:** Wampler, Jennifer (DCR)  
**Sent:** Monday, June 22, 2009 10:43 AM  
**To:** Wampler, Jennifer  
**Subject:** News from Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

 [DCR Outdoor Recreation Planning, Trails and Grants](#)

## Greenways and Trails Program E-News

### IN THIS ISSUE

Equestrians in Virginia  
 More on Safe Routes to Schools  
 Virginia Capital Trail Update  
 Changes to SAFETEA-LU  
 Measuring Impacts  
 Online Resources for Design and Construction  
 VA Tech Inventory-Manager's Application

Issue: 4

Summer 20

 **Forward to a Friend**

Welcome to the fourth issue of the DCR Greenways and Trails Program Newsletter. Scroll down for information on how to unsubscribe or update your profile.



### [High Bridge Trail State P](#)

The first 16 miles of this 34-mile re trail is open for walkers, joggers, bicylists and equestrians-thanks to the generosity of Norfolk Southern Corporation and assistance from the Department of Transportation.

### Upcoming Grants

[Safe Routes to Schools](#)

[Kodak American Greenways](#)

[Climate Showcase Communities](#)

[Bank of America Excellence Initiative](#)  
 (Hampton Roads & Richmond)

[Robert Wood Johnson Local Funding Partnerships](#)

[National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council Challenge Cost-Share Grants](#)

[Toms of Maine 50 States for Good Initiative](#)

Funding opportunities in Virginia can be searched by keyword at this [site](#).

[Grants.gov](#) is the federal funding site for 1000 grant programs offered by 26 agencies.

[Faith and Service Technical Education](#)

## Changes to SAFETEA-LU

### The New Surface Transportation Bill

House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman James Oberstar (Minn.) has released the "blueprint" for the new surface transportation bill. The [Blueprint for Investment and Reform](#) places more emphasis on a performance-based framework for Federal surface transportation. The program's national objectives include:

- reducing fatalities and injuries on our nation's highways
- unlocking the congestion that cripples major cities and the freight transportation network
- providing transportation choices for commuters and travelers
- limiting the adverse effects of transportation on the environment
- and promoting public health and the livability of our communities.

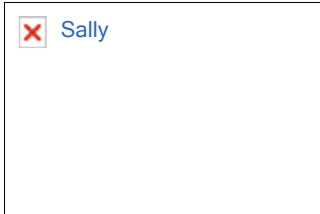
The following programs have been consolidated under the Highway Safety Improvement program:

- Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety
- High Risk Rural Roads
- Operation Lifesaver
- Railway-Highway Grade Crossing
- Road Safety
- Work Zone Safety

The Act creates an Office of Livability within the Federal Highway Administration to administer Safe Routes to Schools, Transportation

[Network](#) offers resources and networking opportunities for collaborators to renew distressed urban communities.

## Equestrians in Virginia



An [equestrian survey](#) completed this year by the [Virginia Horse Council](#) revealed that nearly 80 percent of respondents are leaving the state for trail-riding trips. The top three places in Virginia to ride included National Battlefield Park in Manassas, [James River State Park](#) and [Lake Anna State Park](#).

The top five amenities these riders are seeking (in order) are water, bathrooms, diverse/various trails, overall safety and ample parking.

The [Equestrian Design Guidebook for Trails, Trailheads, and Campgrounds](#) is a wonderful resource for equestrian trail development. This Forest Service website will prompt you for a User name and Password. Type t-d for both.

If you would like to learn more, consider attending the [Southeastern Equestrian Trails Conference](#) in Florida this July.

### More on the Safe Routes to Schools Program

The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program with the Virginia Department of Transportation has released new guidelines for funding. **SRTS workshops will be held in Vienna on July 13 and Portsmouth on July 16.**

Representatives of local governments interested in making walking and/or biking to school a safe transportation option for students in kindergarten through eighth grade are encouraged to attend. The maximum funding award is \$500,000 (per locality). Completed School Travel Plans are due no later than November 27 and applications are due December 28.

Enhancements, Recreational Trails, Scenic Byways, and the [U.S. Bicycle Route System](#).

For a summary article by American Trails, click [here](#).

Also see Secretary of Transportation LaHood's official [blog](#), where he discusses the 18-month reauthorization he says Congress needs to fully deliberate the direction of America's transportation priorities.

## Measuring Impacts

You've heard that trails strengthen communities and provide a good return on investment, but where is the evidence? This article highlights some of the studies done recently that demonstrate why these facilities should be included in your locality's budget.

The [Great Allegheny Passage](#) is a 150-mile system of biking and hiking trails in Maryland and Pennsylvania that are part of the [Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail](#). An [Economic Impact Study](#) done in 2008 showed that \$12 million in annual direct spending and another \$3 million in wages can be attributed to the Passage. Surveyed businesses estimate that roughly a quarter of their sales can be attributed to the trail, with nearly a third reporting plans to expand within the year.

A [case study](#) of North Carolina's Outer Banks revealed that bicycling visitors generate an economic impact of \$60 million annually.

A study on the [economics and benefits of mountain biking](#) found that this sport pumps \$26 billion into the American economy in direct expenditures alone.

If you haven't seen the economic impact studies done for three trails in Virginia, visit these sites for more information.

[Virginia Creeper Trail](#)  
[Washington and Old Dominion Trail](#)  
[The Waterway at New River State Park](#)

Also be sure and check out these resources:

- [American Trails Library](#)
- [Rails to trails conservancy publication](#)
- [How Cities Use Parks for Economic Development](#)

## Online Resources for Sustainable Trail Design and Construction

Water is the most influential factor to consider when designing and laying out trails. Trail alignments interrupt natural drainage patterns and can result in high soil loss if built improperly. Use curvilinear alignment (follow landform and pull in and out of swales) and design so that sheet flow crosses the trail at a right angle. Proper construction must incorporate all natural drainage features because retaining the landform's natural drainage pattern is the key to building a sustainable trail. The following Web links are wonderful resources that you can bookmark for future projects.

[Layout and Flagging](#)

[Design Principles](#)

[Accessibility Guidelines](#) from the Access Board  
 also see [Accessibility Guidelines](#) from the U.S. Forest Service

[Trail Building Toolbox](#) from the Rails-to-trails conservancy

[Best Practices for Trail Design & Construction](#) from the Federal Highway


For information on upcoming SRTS workshops, contact VDOT SRTS Coordinator, Sarah Weisiger at (804) 371-4868 or click [here](#).

### Virginia Capital Trail Update

The Department of Transportation anticipates that another seven miles of the Virginia Capital Trail will be complete by July 20. This section runs west from the Charles City Courthouse towards the Henrico County Line.

For great family day trips, consider leaving from the [Courthouse Visitor Center](#) to visit [Westover](#) and [Berkeley](#) Plantations, or leaving from [Chickahominy Riverfront Park](#) to visit the [Jamestown Settlement](#). The Settlement is roughly seven miles east of the park.

For more information on the Virginia Capital Trail, click [here](#).

 Connecting the Commonwealth

### Training Opportunities

[OHV Recreation Management Online Course](#)

[Webinar: Counting Bicyclists and Pedestrians](#)

[Webinar: Bike Parking: Going Beyond the Hoops](#)

[Brownfields 2009](#)

[NEPA Concepts Online Course](#)

[GIS Introduction for Conservation Professionals](#)

[Looking Beyond the Transportation Footprint: A National Dialogue on New Partners and New Scale of Analysis](#)

[National Physical Activity Plan Conference](#)

[National Scenic Byways Conference](#)

The [U.S. Forest Service](#) offers numerous technical documents through the National Technology and Development Program, including:

[-Low-Water Crossings: Geomorphic, Biological, and Engineering Design Considerations](#)

[-Wetland Trail Design and Construction](#)

[-Vehicle Barriers: Their Use and Planning Considerations](#)

American Trails has information on many subjects, including [design and construction](#), [bridges and structures](#), [trail tools](#), and [trail products](#).

The Professional Trailbuilders Association has a list of publications on [design and construction](#), information on [equipment, materials and services](#), and a list of [contractors by location](#).

The [Toolbox for the Great Outdoors](#) Technical Assistance and Design Program provides links to federal agencies that provide assistance with specific types of projects.

The Project for Public Spaces has a toolkit for [Furnishing Your Public Space](#) with information on seating, ledges, steps, water features, waste receptacles, lighting, signage and more.

The [Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center](#) has information on trail design, roadway and pedestrian facility design, street crossings, traffic calming, on-street parking enhancements, school zone improvements and designing for special populations.

The [Web Soil Survey](#) has soil maps and data available online for more than 95 percent of the nation's counties.

[IMBA Trail Solutions](#) is a professional trail consulting program offering flexible, fee-based trail services that range from trail planning, design, and construction to education and dispute resolution. They offer a page on the [10 Most Common Trailbuilding Mistakes](#) and other resources for [trail building](#).

DCR is in the process of updating Virginia's [Greenways and Trails Toolbox](#). If you have ideas about specific content that would be helpful to your organization, please send them to [jennifer.wampler@dcv.virginia.gov](mailto:jennifer.wampler@dcv.virginia.gov).

## Virginia Tech Trail and Route Inventory

### Web Training on the Manager's Application

If you plan trails or greenways for a municipal, regional or state government in Virginia, tune into a Webcast on August 7 on how to use the manager's application developed by Virginia Tech for the trail and route inventory. For more details, contact [jennifer.wampler@dcv.virginia.gov](mailto:jennifer.wampler@dcv.virginia.gov).

 inventory

*DCR Trails Program Mission: Provide assistance and education to encourage the development, maintenance and promotion of attractive, sustainable and connected trails throughout the state.*

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